

21st. August, 1946.

To the Brethren of Parkdale Masonic Lodge 554.

Worshipful Master, Bro. Wardens and Brethren:-

A very great honour came to me this morning by air mail letter from Australia, dated 16th. August, and an acceptance was air-mailed back the same day. The invitation is to address you, by permission, on a very special occasion, on 20th. September, 1946, - that is, the admission to the third degree of Brothers Fred, Roy, and Desmond Sweeting.

First, by permission, may I tender to you the hearty good wishes of Godson Lodge - 2285 - in the province of Worcestershire. It has been our honour and pleasure to receive several visits from brethren of your country; and certainly we look forward hopefully to further visits.

Next, may I send sincere greetings to Bro. W.H.Sweeting, and thanks to him for many thoughtful acts of kindness.

And then, to Bro. Fred, Roy and Desmond, whom I have not seen, I tender sincere congratulations; and by your very kind invitation and permission, will they please accept these few words by way of address:-

Having now completed a novel experience, you will doubtless review it, stage by stage, in retrospect, and observe the very strange mixture of mental, physical and spiritual "repeats". You started with the questioning doubt of "shall I, or not"? Probably, you consulted "father", which was very natural as well as complimentary to him. Inwardly pleased, but outwardly cautious, "father" went as far as possible, until finally you "knocked on the door", figuratively, of course. The delayed answer provided an anxious time. At a later date, did you observe that when certain physical knocks were made, you were still in a state of ignorance and without any guiding light. There was no apparent hurry to open the door - things had to take a proper normal course; enquiries had to be made even at this stage, and there was a further trial, before the friendly hand took hold of you. Soon there came an invitation to "advance"; and I doubt if you will easily forget the fumbling, shuffling, hesitating, slipshod first steps forward. How exactly like your earlier thoughts on the question "shall I, or not"!

Your most unforgettable moment was your introduction to the three Great Lights, plus, of course, to your new

circle of friends. Soon you discovered that to gain a friend you must be a friend, - to gain the help of a brother you must act in a brotherly manner.

I hope that you know every word of the "Charge". If not, study it closely until you are word perfect; but, in addition, learn to understand every phrase of it.

Another recommendation to you is that you carefully read and study the whole of chapter six of the second book of Chronicles. It is best to start with verse 23 of chapter five so as to get the full sense of the matter. Because of a question on the subject of the Open Book, put to me as a preceptor, I wrote and delivered my first Masonic paper "Why the V.S.L. ?". The chapter records in clear and beautiful language the dedication of King Solomon's Temple, and is intended to remind you of your very recent dedication to full Masonic service. Please read it more than once to get full understanding of its sense and beauty.

After serving your apprenticeship, your experience as a craftsman was somewhat brief, but you would observe that your progress was forward and upward, spirally as it were. Not only do we and should we, advance in a forward direction, but we should strive to elevate our thoughts and ourselves from lower to higher planes or levels.

What a change is to be found in our third experience. Our day is done - our light has failed (or so it seems) and after being attacked from every quarter we pass out before a single glimmering ray. But the music, solemn at the introduction of it, finishes on a glorious note of triumph. Now we realise why, following our three steps which form the Cross of Calvary, and typical of our earthly and erratic trials and troubles, we were permitted to make four forward steps, boldly as though marching. Faith, following hope, tells us that there is something for us beyond the grave - light, eternal light, of which our present sun is but feebly representative. No doubt you had in your minds a verse which reads -

"And there shall be no night there;
and they need no candle, neither
light of the sun, for the Lord God
giveth them light; and they shall
reign for ever and ever."

In addition, I often think of chapter 60 of Isaiah, vv. 1, 2, 3, 19, and 20. It commences with the lovely words -
"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, ----"

Very soon, as you begin to think things over, you will realise that only "substituted secrets" have been made known to you. Will you be satisfied? I doubt it. True, the light has shone for us and we have learned much; but there are still too many clouds between ourselves and the sun; too many veils hiding from us the full light towards which we would progress. The clear unclouded sun, neither physically nor spiritually, can be ours on this side of the grave, simply because we are not made to receive it; but we certainly want more light, having gone so far. "Substituted secrets" are not sufficient for us; and so we ask to be exalted into the H.R.A., where the sun at its meridian, and in all its splendour, shows us all that we could wish for; and once more we have a vision of light, more beautiful than before, ineffable, that will live with us all our days.

Let me exhort you not to be content with the bare candlelight of masonry, pure as it may be; but to progress a little further into the light of the SUN. The one is but a substitute, and a really good substitute, full of symbolisms; but the other approaches reality and the FINITE comes as close as possible to the INFINITE. You will have no regrets. Complete your masonic education just as soon as you may and your circumstances permit. You have been exhorted and have undertaken, without neglecting the duties of your ordinary station in life, to endeavour to make a daily advancement in masonic knowledge; and here you will find a grand opportunity.

While it is true that we can obtain benefit from light without seeing it; and benefit from truth without acknowledging it; the greatest benefits must follow when light and truth are seen, acknowledged, and USED.

May you endeavour to see, to understand, to appreciate, and finally to USE in all your daily life, all the good for which masonry stands. Your father, your lodge, and masonry universal, offer you their united confidence, and promise you their full support and assistance. The brotherly hand is always outstretched, waiting to grasp and to be grasped in exchange.

C.T. BARLOW, 30°
O.B.E.,

London Work